



For Immediate Release

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BOARD BRIEFED ON GAP BETWEEN AVAILABLE ENGINEERING JOBS AND GRADUATES ABLE TO FILL THEM

The Idaho State Board of Education today heard findings of a year-long legislative-funded study into the current and forecasted supply and demand for engineers and computer science professionals in the Idaho workforce.

The study found that a significant gap exists between the annual supply of college graduates from Idaho's public and private higher education institutions able to fulfill projected annual industry demand.

An employer survey indicates that in 2023, there were 1,953 engineering-related job openings in Idaho compared to 1289 graduates from both public and private institutions.

Key takeaways include:

- Math performance is strongly linked to success in engineering fields
- Fewer females enter engineering-related fields compared to males.
- Only about 60 percent of engineering graduates stay and work in Idaho, while about 73 percent of computer science graduates stay and work in Idaho.

- Employers unable to find qualified employees in Idaho are more likely to locate their businesses elsewhere

The new LAUNCH grants for graduating high school seniors in 2024 seeks to close the gap and help employers fill other in-demand jobs with Idaho students.

The Board directed staff to begin developing a plan for additional actions that can be taken to address the gap, which will be discussed at a future Board meeting.

The report was produced by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) in partnership with state leaders in industry, energy, technology, and education.

The report's findings have been shared with the Governor's office, and the Industry Advisory Boards for the Colleges of Engineering and Idaho's public universities.

The report was also distributed to leaders in Idaho industry who comprised the study's core advisory team, as well as the Idaho National Lab's Workforce Development Lead, Idaho STEM Action Center, Deans of the Colleges of Engineering and Computer Science, Micron Foundation, and Idaho Technology Council.

The study was presented during the second day of the Board's Regular Board meeting held on the campus of Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston.

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